

Message Text

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SUBJ: DIRECTOR KEOGH'S MEETING WITH SECINFO BUDIMOVSKI-
ROBERTS BOOK

1. AT END OF HOUR-LONG MONOLOGUE RE FOREIGN MEDIA COVERAGE
OF YUGOSLAVIA INCLUDING RECENT PROBLEM MUTUAL PRESS COVERAGE,
BUDIMOVSKI MADE OFFICIAL BUT LOW-KEY DEMARCHE CRITICIZING
RECENTLY RELEASED BOOK BY USIA/IOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR WALTER
ROBERTS ENTILED, "TITO, MIHAIOVIC AND THE ALLIES."

2. CRITICISM INVOLVED FOLLOWING MAJOR ALLEGATIONS:

1) EQUATING OF TITO AND MIHAIOVIC, WHO WAS "TRAITOR" TO
YUGOSLAVIA, 2) EQUATING OF PARTISANS AND CHETNIKS AS FORCES
OPPOSING GERMANS AND AXIS FORCES, AT LEAST IN EARLY PART OF
WAR, AND 3) STATEMENT THAT MACEDONIANS WELCOMED BULGARIAN
OCCUPATION FORCES AS LIBERATORS FROM SERBIAN OPPRESSION.

3. WHILE PRESENTATION RELATIVELY MILD AND BUDIMOVSKI
ADMITTED ROBERTS IS KNOWN AS "GREAT FRIEND" OF YUGOSLAVIA,
SAID IF HE WERE TO AUTHOR ANTI-AMERICAN BOOK OR ARTICLE, WE
WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY HOLD HIM RESPONSIBLE FOR IT IN HIS CAPACITY
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AS YUGOSLAV OFFICIAL.

4. DIRECTOR RESPONDED THAT HE HAD NOT READ BOOK AND THUS COULD NOT COMMENT OTHER THAN TO NOTE THAT HE KNEW ROBERTS WAS GOOD FRIEND OF YUGOSLAVIA AND EXPERIENCED AND CAREFUL RESEARCHER. HE CONTINUED THAT BOOK HAD BEEN WRITTEN BY ROBERTS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL AND ON OWN TIME AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS EITHER USIA OR OTHERWISE OFFICIALLY SPONSORED.

5. BUDIMOVSKI REPLIED THAT HE HAD NOT SEEN BOOK EITHER AND HAD GOTTEN HIS INFORMATION FROM YUGOSLAV EMBASSY WASHINGTON REPORT. SAID THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO MAKE UNNECESSARY PROBLEM OF IT, BUT HAD TO RAISE IT.

6. BUDIMOVSKI ALSO RAISED SUBJECT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH SHIRLEY AND LITTELL IN SKOPJE. IN BOTH CASES, CRITICISM WAS SUBSTANTIALLY MORE VEHEMENT THAN DURING OFFICIAL SESSION WITH DIRECTOR. STATED COULD NOT UNDERSTAND HOW BOOK, WHICH COULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED AS "UNFRIENDLY" TO YUGOSLAVIA COULD BE AUTHORED AND RELEASED BY HIGH-LEVEL ASSISTANT OF DIRECTOR AT THIS TIME. SAID COULD RESULT IN REAL PROBLEM IF TITO SAW IT AND REACTED NEGATIVELY. SHIRLEY AND LITTELL RESPONDED ALONG SAME LINES AS DIRECTOR TOOK IN MEETING TODAY.
TOON

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